

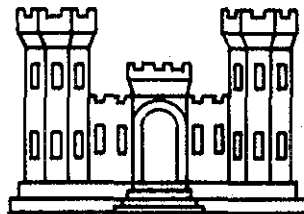
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PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

OF

SCARBORO RIVER

MAINE

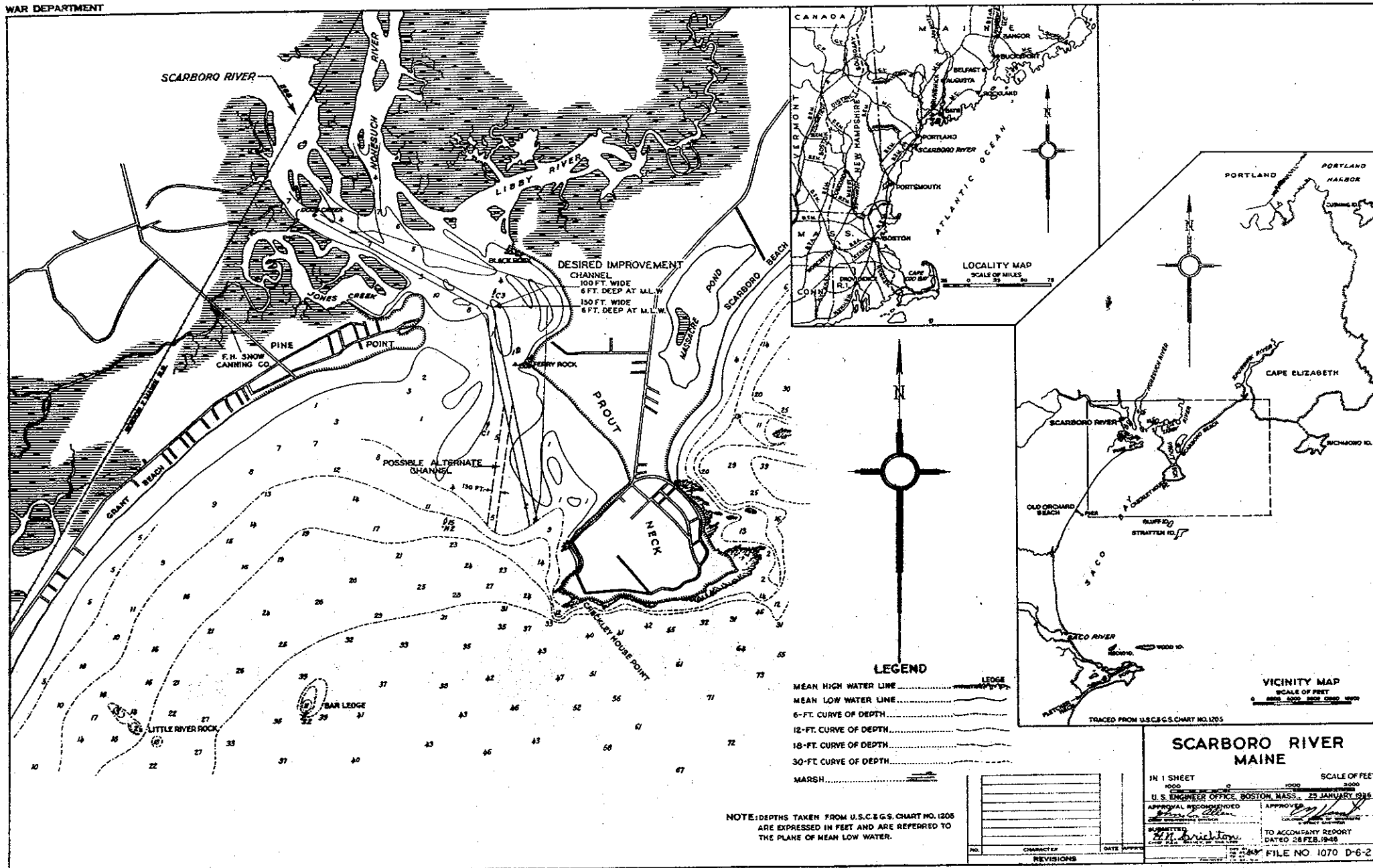


**AUTHORITY - THIS REPORT IS
SUBMITTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH
SECTION 6 OF THE RIVER AND
HARBOR ACT, APPROVED, 2 MARCH
1945.**

**U. S. ENGINEER OFFICE,
BOSTON, MASS.**

28 FEB. 1946

COPY NO. 20



PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION OF SCARBORO RIVER, MAINE,
BETWEEN PROUTS NECK AND PINE POINT.

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Syllabus

The district engineer is of the opinion that Scarboro River, Maine is worthy of improvement, provided it can be accomplished at a reasonable cost. He, therefore, recommends a survey of Scarboro River, Maine, between Prouts Neck and Pine Point, to determine the extent, cost and advisability of improvement, and the proper basis of local cooperation.

War Department,
United States Engineer Office,
Boston 16, Massachusetts,
28 February 1946.

Subject: Preliminary examination of Scarboro River, Maine, between Prouts Neck and Pine Point.

To: The Chief of Engineers, U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.,
through the Division Engineer, New England Division,
Boston 10, Massachusetts.

1. Authority.-- This report is submitted in compliance with Section 6 of the River and Harbor Act approved 2 March 1945 (Public Law No. 14 - 79th Congress) which reads in part as follows:

"Sec. 6. The Secretary of War is hereby authorized and directed to cause preliminary examinations and surveys to be made at the following-named localities, Scarboro River, Maine, between Prouts Neck and Pine Point".

2. Description.-- Scarboro River is a small and generally shallow stream which rises in the marshlands within the limits of the Town of Scarboro, and enters Saco Bay just west of Prouts Neck. It is 17 miles by water southeast of Portland, Maine. At its mouth it passes through shifting sands which continually change its course. The controlling depths in the river are so shallow that boats larger than rowboats can get in or out only at the higher stages of tide.

3. From the west bank of Scarboro River at its mouth the shore sweeps in a crescent shaped beach $6\frac{3}{4}$ miles long to the mouth of the Saco River, the central portion of which is Old Orchard Beach. The water area in front of this arc is called Saco Bay.

4. In calm weather during the summer months fishing and pleasure boats sometimes anchor in an area at the mouth of Scarboro River which has depths sufficient for these small boats. The prevailing winds are southwesterly during the summer and northerly during the winter. At all seasons the heaviest gales are generally from the northeastward or eastward.

5. The mean range of tide is 8.8 feet and the spring range is 10.1 feet. There are no bridges crossing the waterway under consideration. The improvement under consideration in this report would not result in any shoreline changes, nor would it involve any questions of land reclamation, water power, flood control, or other special subjects. The locality is shown on U.S.C. & G.S. Charts Nos. 231 and 1205, and on the map accompanying this report.

6. Tributary area.- The Town of Scarboro had a population of 2,842 in 1940, and an assessed valuation of \$3,242,439. The permanent population of Prouts Neck and Pine Point are small but are augmented during the summer by an influx of summer residents, as are the neighboring communities and beaches. Old Orchard Beach, the largest of the nearby summer resorts, has a permanent population of 2,557 (1940), a summer population averaging about 35,000, and it is estimated that approximately 1,500,000 tourists visit there each summer. There are no important industries or large centers of population in the vicinity. The principal sources of income for the permanent residents of the tributary area are the summer

recreation business, ground and lobster fishing, clamming and farming. The F. H. Snow Canning Company gives year-round employment to a substantial number of the local residents. Scarborough is located on the Boston & Maine Railroad and is served by a series of good roads.

7. Prior reports.- A preliminary examination report, unfavorable to the construction of a breakwater at Prouts Neck, was submitted 4 January 1936, and is the only report that has been prepared on this general locality.

8. Existing project.- No project for the improvement of this locality has ever been adopted.

9. Terminal and transfer facilities.- There are no wharves on Scarborough River.

10. Improvement desired.- A hearing was held at Scarborough, Maine on 23 August 1945 in order to determine the improvement desired and to give interested parties an opportunity to be heard. There were present at the hearing representatives of the town government, as well as of the local fishing, lobstering, canning and recreational businesses.

11. The advocates of the improvement propose dredging a channel 6 feet deep at mean low water and 150 feet wide through the bar at the entrance to Scarborough River, and a channel of the same depth but with a width of 100 feet inside the bar up to Dock Creek.

12. It was brought out that the formation of the bar at the entrance to the river makes it very difficult to navigate the channel at low water stages, even with shallow draft craft.

13. The proponents expect that the number of fishermen working out of Scarborough River would be increased if a suitable entrance and channel are available and that the working season would be extended from the present 9-month period to permit operations throughout the year. It was stated that delivery of fish and clams by boat to the

local cannery would also follow with a resultant increase in local employment.

14. If the channel is dredged, local interests stated that a wharf, with suitable service facilities would be constructed by them. Suitable spoil areas would also be provided if the dredging can be accomplished by hydraulic plant. It was the feeling of those present that if further cooperation was found necessary, consideration of a cash contribution toward the cost of the project would be entertained.

15. Commerce and vessel traffic.- The only commerce and vessel traffic on Scarborough River is connected with lobstering. There are 20 boats working out of the river at present doing a business of about \$80,000 a year, according to local interests. Three pleasure boats of light draft are the only ones using the river for recreational purposes.

16. Difficulties attending navigation.- The passage of vessels from the Scarborough River to Casco Bay is only possible at high water levels and then is restricted to those of shallow draft. In addition, the shoal waters in the river limit the size of vessels using it. During the winter the ice conditions are such as to reduce the effective time of the fishermen who attempt to use the river the year around.

17. Discussion.- At the beginning of the nineteenth century the channel in the Scarborough River was sufficiently deep to permit vessels engaged in the West Indies trade to navigate it for a distance of more than 3 miles from its mouth. Shoaling in the river has taken place during the last hundred years to the extent that use of the channel is now limited to lobster boats drawing a small amount of water. At the mouth of the river a bar has formed across the entrance rendering passage both difficult and hazardous.

18. While there are 20 lobster boats operating from the Scarborough River, they do so with difficulty. An improved entrance and a suitable channel would enable the fishermen to conduct year-round operations and would serve to attract additional fishermen to the use of the river.

19. The surrounding locality includes Old Orchard Beach and other recreational areas that are frequented during the summer months by large numbers of vacationists. The hotels in the vicinity depend largely on the fishermen working out of Scarborough River to supply them with seafood. It represents a considerable business and source of revenue to the Town of Scarborough. If the channel in the river and the bar at its mouth continue to shoal, it is possible that those men presently fishing out of the river will have to move elsewhere with consequent loss of revenue to the town, and higher prices to the local hotels.

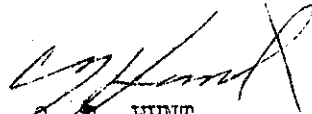
20. The F. H. Snow Canning Company is located a short way from the river. This company cans various types of seafood which, at the present time, it is forced to bring to the factory by trucks from Gloucester, Mass., and even Long Island, N. Y. The company is desirous of receiving shipments by water and expects that if this is made possible, that they will be able to employ about 100 additional people.

21. There are no wharves or docks on Scarborough River at present. Proponents of the improvement state that if the improvement is made, a suitable wharf and facilities will be provided. They expect that as a result of the improvement and the furnishing of a wharf, many of the summer residents will take up pleasure boating.

22. In addition to furnishing a suitable wharf, local interests state that suitable spoil areas will be supplied and that consideration would be given to furnishing a cash contribution if it is required. It is believed that this contribution would be for only a nominal sum.

23. Conclusion.- In view of the above, the district engineer is of the opinion that the improvement of Scarborough River, Maine, between Prouts Neck and Pine Point, is worthy of further investigation.

24. Recommendation.- He, therefore, recommends a survey of Scarborough River, Maine, between Prouts Neck and Pine Point, for the purpose of ascertaining the extent, cost and advisability of improvement, and the proper basis of local cooperation.



C. F. HUNT,
Colonel, Corps of Engineers,
District Engineer.

Inclosure:
Map

